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Letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 20 March 2016 from the Secretary-General of the Frente Polisario, Mohamed Abdelaziz, addressed to the Secretary-General (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rafael **Ramírez**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

We are following, with legitimate concern, the recent serious developments in Western Sahara, whereby the Kingdom of Morocco has confronted the United Nations and its Security Council with a series of faits accomplis that reveal a clear intention to defeat all the efforts that the international community has been making for more than 40 years to complete the decolonization of the last African Territory that remains on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Given these developments, the Frente Polisario wishes to reiterate its full confidence in the efforts of the United Nations, under your high leadership, to achieve a peaceful solution that guarantees the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly and the resolutions of the African Union.

The Frente Polisario reaffirms its full commitment to the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Frente Polisario, which throughout the process has demonstrated a positive attitude of cooperation with all United Nations bodies and MINURSO, nonetheless has repeatedly drawn your attention and that of the Security Council to the risks that Moroccan obstruction has posed to the peace process for a number of years.

The Frente Polisario strongly condemns the irresponsible decision of the Kingdom of Morocco to expel MINURSO personnel, and holds Morocco fully responsible for the consequences of this action.

The Frente Polisario opposes this illegal and unilateral decision by Morocco, which seeks to distort the mandate of MINURSO in order to turn the Mission into the protector of the Moroccan occupier or to limit that mandate solely to the maintenance of the ceasefire, in violation of the agreements concluded between the two parties and the decisions taken by the international community.

The Frente Polisario would like to recall that the MINURSO premises are located not in Moroccan territory but in the Territory of Western Sahara, which is included in the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. As a result, the Territory is not under Moroccan jurisdiction and Morocco has no power to expel members of the Mission from the Territory of Western Sahara.

The decision by Morocco to expel personnel comprising the civilian (political and administrative) component of MINURSO ultimately spells the end of the mandate for which the Mission was established. By implementing this dangerous decision, Morocco is violating Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and contravening the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

It should be recalled that the two parties' respect for the ceasefire is contingent on the referendum to be organized by the civilian component of MINURSO. Through this decision, Morocco is fuelling tensions and pushing the Sahrawi people to resume the armed struggle.

The Frente Polisario reaffirms its commitment to the settlement plan signed by the two parties, Sahrawi and Moroccan, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in 1991, which resulted in the deployment of MINURSO.

The Frente Polisario urgently calls on the Security Council to assume its responsibilities as the representative and highest authority of MINURSO and the guarantor of the task with which the Mission was entrusted, namely the organization of the referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara.

The people of Western Sahara, who have been waiting more than 40 years in suffering and exile, have placed their trust in the United Nations, which must in return fully shoulder its responsibility in relation to the Territory and people of Western Sahara.

Should this dangerous situation persist, the Frente Polisario reserves the right to take such measures as may be necessary to address it.